



## New CHIP Income Guidelines for 2006!

The CHIP income guidelines increased this February. The chart below lists the new income guidelines for the number of family members living in your household. Please keep in mind, if your income is slightly over the guideline, you may still be eligible.

Family Size (children and adults)	Family Income
2	\$19,800
3	\$24,900
4	\$30,000
5	\$35,100
6	\$40,200
7	\$45,300
8	\$50,400



## Renew CHIP Annually

An application is good for one year. A renewal application will be mailed 60 days before coverage ends. You must return the completed application to renew coverage. Please do not assume your child's CHIP insurance is continuous or that your child's renewal is guaranteed. Changes in family size, income, or other insurance, could impact your child's eligibility. Please complete the renewal application and return it to CHIP as soon as possible. You will be sent a letter when an eligibility decision has been made.

## Do You Know a Child Losing Health Insurance?

Children who lose health insurance coverage and meet CHIP eligibility requirements may be enrolled one month after coverage ends. Under certain circumstances, they can be enrolled the month after coverage ends. Previously, CHIP was unable to cover children until they were uninsured for three months.

## CHIP Offers Extended Mental Health Benefits for Children with Special Needs

Beginning March 1, CHIP provides additional mental health benefits for CHIP children who have a serious emotional disturbance (SED).

The CHIP Basic Plan covers limited inpatient mental health services and counseling sessions. The CHIP Extended Plan covers the following community-based mental health services: therapeutic group home services (including room and board); therapeutic family services; day treatment; community-based psychiatric rehabilitation and support services; individual and family counseling sessions; and respite care.

In order to qualify for Extended Plan services, children must meet the clinical definition of SED. Mental health professionals must submit a clinical assessment to CHIP to verify SED. CHIP staff estimate 200 to 300 children may qualify for Extended Plan benefits.

Families interested in the CHIP Extended Plan can visit [www.chip.mt.gov](http://www.chip.mt.gov) for more information.



## New CHIP Dentists

Here is a list of new CHIP dentists and locations in the Fall newsletter:

- Three Forks: Chad Russell, 285-5234
- Wolf Point: Myriam Greene, 653-2890
- Bozeman: Craig Barney, 586-3040



For a complete listing of CHIP dentists, see your dental provider list, visit our website, or call our toll free number. The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends children have their first dental visit when their first tooth comes in or by age one. Don't wait to call your dentist as she or he may be scheduling appointments 3-4 months in the future.

## Regular Check-Ups!!! They're a Good Part of Every Child's Life

**Well-baby and well-child check-ups** are important even when your child feels fine. Well-baby and well-child checkups are physical exams including:

- height and weight screenings
- developmental screenings
- hearing exams
- immunizations
- lab tests
- vision screenings.



**Well-child check-ups** will help keep your child healthy. Early treatment can help keep health problems from becoming serious. Immunizations help prevent illnesses.

The **recommended well-child visit schedule** is:

- Ages 2 weeks to 24 months — every 2-3 months.
- Ages 2 to 6 years — every year.
- Ages 6 to 18 years — every two years.

With CHIP, there are **no co-payments** for **well-child checkups**, including age-appropriate immunizations. Contact your CHIP provider today for a well-baby or well-child appointment.

## Vaccinations to Protect Your Children

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children receive the following vaccinations:

- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTP)
- Haemophilus influenzae Type b-meningitis (Hib)
- Inactivated polio (IPV)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)
- Influenza (flu)



Contact your CHIP provider for the immunization schedule.

A new **Tdap Vaccine**, which includes a pertussis booster along with the tetanus booster is now recommended for middle school students. Also, the **Meningococcal vaccine** to prevent Meningitis should be given to children aged 11-12 as well as to unvaccinated adolescents going into high school. It is also recommended for college freshman living in dorms.

## Kids Only!

## A Healthy Smile is Always in Style!

*Sink your teeth into these fun facts:*

Teeth are the hardest substance in the body.

Dogs have 42 teeth. Cats have 30 teeth. Pigs have 44 teeth. Adults have 32 teeth. Children (until about age 12) have 20 baby teeth.

Armadillos have as many as 104 teeth.

Sharks have an unlimited supply of teeth. When one tooth falls out, another grows in. A shark may lose as many as **50,000** teeth in its lifetime!

George Washington- our first President, had a set of false teeth made from ivory, not from wood. Like piano keys??

Famous Dentists include:  
—Paul Revere- famous for his wild horse ride in 1775  
—Doc Holiday—helped Wyatt Earp win the OK Corral shootout  
—Pearl Zane Grey- writer of Western books  
—Thomas Welch- his company makes the grape juice.

Dentists recommend brushing your teeth for 2-3 minutes twice a day to prevent tooth decay and gum disease. People are not like sharks. We need all our teeth. Schedule an appointment with your children's CHIP dentist soon.  
(How many teeth did you find in this article?)



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!



Children's Health Insurance  
Plan (CHIP) Toll Free:  
1-877-543-7669  
(1-877-KIDSNOW)



BlueCHIP  
Blue Cross Blue Shield  
of Montana  
1-800-447-7828, ext. 8647



CHIP Website Address:  
[www.chip.mt.gov](http://www.chip.mt.gov)



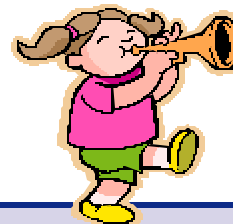
CHIP E-mail Address:  
[chip@mt.gov](mailto:chip@mt.gov)



CHIP Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 202951  
Helena, MT 59620-2951



**Just A Reminder...**  
Children are not eligible for CHIP if they have any other health insurance or Medicaid. The State of Montana pays an insurance premium every month for each child who has CHIP insurance. Please let us know if your children no longer need CHIP so more Montana children can be insured.



# CHIPchat

WINTER  
2005/2006

Keeping CHIP Families Informed

## Montana Children's Health Insurance Plan

### CHIP Statewide Media Campaign



On February 13, the Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) began a statewide four-week media campaign, using television, radio, and newspaper ads to encourage parents to apply for CHIP. The campaign's theme is "Health Insurance for Kids; Peace of Mind for Parents." The ads feature Governor Brian Schweitzer and Nancy Schweitzer.

In Montana, about 17 percent, or more than 40,000 kids, do not have health insurance. It is estimated that 15,000 uninsured children may be eligible for CHIP. Recent legislation increasing CHIP funding opened up thousands of slots in this popular program. CHIP's goal is to be at full enrollment, around 13,900 kids, in the next few months.

### What's inside...

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**Vaccinations to Protect your Children**

**Kids Only!**

### CHIP Community Partners

Over 60 Montana hospitals, health centers, doctors' offices, dentist offices, pharmacies, and other agencies are helping to insure more children by distributing CHIP information to families in their communities. CHIP provides all the materials, including brochure display stands. Contact Michael Mahoney, Community Relations Manager at (406) 444-7877 if you would like to receive CHIP materials to distribute to your friends, family, patients, and clients.

### Applying for CHIP is Easy

The easiest way for families to apply for coverage is to visit the CHIP website at [www.chip.mt.gov](http://www.chip.mt.gov). Parents can fill out the application on the computer or download an application to fill out. Signed applications are then mailed or faxed to CHIP. Applications are also available at local public health departments, Offices of Public Assistance, community health centers, Head Start locations, Indian Health Services and Tribal Clinics, and at participating health care facilities.

Applications can be requested by e-mail at [chip@mt.gov](mailto:chip@mt.gov) or by calling CHIP toll-free at **1-877-KidsNow (1-877-543-7669)**.